

population served, distance from existing post office and financial position. The existing norms in this respect are as under:

NORMS FOR RURAL AREAS FOR OPENING OF POST OFFICES:

In normal rural areas.

- 1) *Population:* 3000 population in a group of villages;
- 2) *Distance :* The minimum distance from the nearest existing post office will be 3 Kms.
- 3) *Anticipated income:* The minimum anticipated revenue will be 33 1/3% of the cost.

IN HILLY, TRIBAL, DESERT AND INACCESSIBLE RURAL AREAS:

- 1) *Population:* 500 population in an individual village or 1000 population in a group of villages.
- 2) *Distance:* The distance limit will be the same as above except that in hilly areas, the minimum distance limit can be relaxed by the Directorate where such relaxation is warranted by special circumstances.
- 3) *Anticipated income:* The minimum anticipated income will be 15% of the cost.

(b) and (c). In view of reply to (a) above the question does not arise.

[English]

Thermal Power Generation

*352. SHRI CHETAN P.S. CHAUHAN:
SHRIMATI MAHENDRA KUMARI:

Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether thermal power generation has registered a negative growth during the first six months of the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have identified the causes thereof; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

(d) As a continuing programme Government had initiated various measures for optimal utilisation of the installed thermal generation capacity such as:

- (i) Renovation and Modernisation of old Units;
- (ii) Assistance to Electricity Boards in undertaking plant betterment programmes; and
- (iii) Supply of requisite quantity and quality of coal.

[Translation]

Northern Region Electricity Board

*353. SHRI SIMON MARANDI: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Northern Region Elec-